The ASBURY SEMINARIAN

The
Wesleyan
Message
In The
Life And
Thought
Of Today

SPRING-SUMMER 1958

Bulletin of Asbury Theological Seminary

The ASBURY SEMINARIAN

Vol. XII Wilmore, Ky., Spring, Summer, 1958 No. 2

Subscription Price $2.00 per annum

Single Copies $1.00

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Published quarterly by *Asbury Theological Seminary* at Wilmore, Kentucky. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office in Wilmore, Kentucky, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

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Mysticism In Wesley

Howard F. VanValin

Mysticism in Christianity

While Monasticism was "the discipline of the physical for the sake of the spiritual,"[1] Mysticism was "the discipline of the mental for the sake of the spiritual."[2] Therefore, it was consequential that in putting their bodies through inhumane treatments, the ascetics engaged their minds in mental gymnastics as well. Their minds were purified by a crucifixion of the body. So Mysticism was logically inherent within Monasticism.

There are many conceptions of mysticism which vary considerably. One secular encyclopedia broadly defined it as the "practice of uniting one-self with the Deity or other unifying principle of life, linked with religion; in a more popular sense any sort of non-rational belief."[3] Harnack, the noted historian, says: "Mysticism is Catholic piety in general, so far as this piety is not merely ecclesiastical obedience, that is fides implicita..."[4] Lehmann described this implicit faith as exemplified in the thoughts and life of Santa Teresa, the greatest mystic soul. Her life was not confined entirely to Catholic thought, for Lehmann says that she was "almost Protestant."[5]

Many writers have considered anyone participating in any sort of Mysticism as tainted with fanaticism and heresy. But many movements have become known by the extremists and distorters of the true picture. This has always been true in Mysticism, but Mysticism does have genuine Christian elements.

Union with God did not mean union in a pantheistic sense, but rather a transformation of soul through

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[1] James Deforrest Murch, *Christian Education and The Local Church*, p. 56.
[2] *Ibid.* , p. 57.
[3] William Bridgwater, *The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, p. 669.
[4] James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, p. 62.
[5] *Loc. cit.*

> love, leading up to a condition of perfect acquiescence to the will of God.[6]

There have been as many varieties of mystics as there are religions. Harnack claims that there have always been "spurious" mystics in the church and always will be. "It was always the Ultra's, who, by making an appeal to them, brought discredit upon the 'Church' mystics."[7] There is a mystical element in Christianity, but Christianity does not rest upon a mystical basis. The experience of the Christian "is mystical in proportion as the soul has direct personal intercourse with God through Christ."[8] If this view is accepted, no evil stigmatism should be placed upon any mystic soul who does not delve into the "extremes" of holy living, but practices the presence of God on a Scriptural basis. The apostolic Christianity cannot be divorced from Mysticism, which has been defined as "the type of religion which puts the emphasis on immediate awareness of relation with God..."[9] Thus, Rufus Jones says, "It is religion in its most acute, intense and living stage."[10]

Though there were many extremists and heretics among the mystics of the Church, the numerous and varied "corruptions ought not to be identified with its essence."[11] Christian mysticism differs widely from the Platonic mysteriosophy with its pantheistic view and emphases upon the negative. Divine revelation cannot possibly be separated from true Mysticism, for "...not only in John, but also in Paul, there are plentiful traces of Mysticism."[12] Inge felt that the mystical elements of Paul's theology have been under-estimated; and that "all the essentials of mysticism are to be found in the epistles..."[13] The most vital elements of Paul's Mysticism are derived from his vital intimate fellowship with the living Christ.

Both St. John and Paul agree:

> ...to the mystic idea of the believer's oneness with Christ, to the pre-eminence of Love, and to the Holy Spirit as the Source of knowledge of the things of God, the Giver and Sustainer of spiritual life, and the witness to the Divine sonship of believers.[14]

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6 *Loc. cit.*
7 *Loc. cit.*
8 *Loc. cit.*
9 *Ibid.*, p. 63.
10 *Loc. cit.*
11 *Loc. cit.*
12 *Loc. cit.*
13 *Loc. cit.*
14 *Loc. cit.*

True mysticism was epitomized in the Scriptures.

> The Christianity which is content to remain non-mystical is impoverished at the very center of its being....Had all Christians understood, and lived up to, their belief, they would all have been mystics.[15]

Prophetism

Mysticism was inherent within Monasticism and, no doubt, was stimulated by the monastic ideals; however, it did not originate within the monastic movement. All men are created with a capacity to desire and contemplate God in reverence and worship; hence, elements of Mysticism have always existed in the hearts of men and women. But some of the more distinguishing ideals of the mystical movement were more fully represented by the prophetism of the Old Testament, as well as the early centuries of the Church. The prophet was known for his outward manifestations of an inward communion with God.

> ...the characteristic of the 'prophet' was his extempore, some claimed his inspired, utterance. He was 'gifted' to speak the word of God in free spontaneous discourse, oftentimes in ecstatic forms.[16]

Prophets even existed in the days of the Apostle Paul, but the movement was suppressed by the growing sacerdotalism (priestly office and liturgy) of the Roman Church.

"The prophet was thus essentially a preacher, generally a traveling preacher, though, unlike the apostle, he was not deprived of the liberty of settling down in one place."[17] Not being a teacher, "the emphasis was laid upon intuition and not assimilation."[18] He did not instruct, but warned; was not a pastor, but an ante-evangelist; and as such, his supreme function was the proclamation to backsliders of the forgiveness of their sins.

Upon a closer examination of early Prophetism, a fundamental agreement is found between it and primitive Methodism.

> The two movements, in fact, stand for the same liberty of prophesying. The enemies of the two were the same--occasional inner extravagance, the oppo-

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[15] *Loc. cit.* (Quote from Moberly).

[16] Herbert B. Workman, *The Place of Methodism in the Catholic Church*, p. 57.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

[18] *Loc. cit.*

> sition from without of those with whom order is paramount. The duties of the two were much the same, even to the matter of wandering, and the manner of payment of those who rested for the while on their 'circuits.' But most important of all is the witness borne by both movements to the free utterance of the Holy Spirit as one of the elemental facts of a living faith. This utterance neither the growth of sacerdotalism, nor the claims of decorum, nor even the 'foolishness of preaching' itself is able to destroy. That 'Prophetism' is an essential part of Methodism is not only demonstrated by her early history, but also by one curious fact. When at times Methodism has 'feasts' and 'band-meetings,' in the ministrations of her local preachers, or otherwise, she has always seen the rise, commonly by a secession from her own ranks, of a movement reviving the 'prophet.'[19]

Thus, there are some noteworthy parallels between Methodism and Prophetism characterizing both movements: outward antagonists being formalists; internal enemies being fanatics; itinerate preaching; and a strong belief in the free utterance of the Holy Spirit.

Mysticism before Conversion

Until he was twenty-two years of age, Wesley was satisfied with the formalism of the Anglican Church. His early home training under the Church of England, his parents once Puritan, demonstrated to him the outward signs of the Christian life. However, in his public school days, he became indifferent to his Puritanic training, and excused himself for backsliding into habitual sins. Thus, he began "taking refuge in the defense that he was not 'so bad as other people.'"[20] This attitude of spiritual complacency continued until he received his B.A. degree from Oxford in 1724; and then, upon counseling with his father concerning choosing his vocation for life, he decided upon the ministry. For three years he sought to improve his spiritual status by various reforms, devotions, introspection, continual counsel from his virtuous and pious mother, and an extremely self-disciplined life.

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[19] *Ibid.* , pp. 58, 59.

[20] Mary Alice Tenney, *Blueprint for a Christian World*, p. 65.

In 1727 Wesley contacted a book that was to change his thinking and bear influence upon him for the rest of his life. Upon reading William Law's Treatise on Christian Perfection, he was "seized with an idea that never after let him go."[21] There were men in past history of the church who influenced Wesley, although their touch was not direct. Boehm was one of the great mystics who influenced William Law. He influenced Arndt, Spener, Francke, and Fox, all of whom produced works which Law read previously to preparing his Christian Perfection. Thus, there were quite a few mystics who assisted in swaying Wesley's mind to the thinking of that gigantic intellect of the eighteenth century, William Law. John Wesley was deeply moved by the life of Madame Guyon and her books, and even after his conversion and repudiation of mysticism, he wrote very favorably of her.

Law and Wesley had much in common. Both claimed strict religious backgrounds; were deeply intellectual; disparaged public opinion for the sake of their convictions; and were intent upon disciplined living. After reading Law's book, Wesley desired to meet him personally and consult his opinion upon such a life as he was propagating. So he walked to his home at Putney, outside London (in order to save money for the poor he refused to hire a ride), and visited with the man who was to play a great part in his life. At first Wesley was prepared to object to Law's views as too high for any human to attain, but Law replied, "We shall do well to aim at the highest degrees of perfection, if we may thereby at least attain to mediocrity."[22] Therefore, Wesley set about to try to imitate the ideals of William Law; some of which never left him.

Law said that God, in relation to man, is "an all-speaking, all-working, all-illuminating Essence that becomes the true light of our Minds here."[23] This he accepted from the Friends but denounced both the cold formalism and the wild "enthusiasm" of the two prevalent, opposite extremes within the Friends' movement. Between these two ultra views he felt a mean should be established; then true form and inward enthusiasm would take their proper places.

> ...it is the running away from this Enthusiasm that has made so many great Scholars as useless to the Church as tinkling cymbals, and all Christendom a

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 73
[22] Robert Southey, *The Life of John Wesley*, p. 47.
[23] Richard Green, *John Wesley, Evangelist*, p. 75.

mere Babel of learned Confusion.[24]

After digesting both Law's devotional books, A Treatise on Christian Perfection, and The Serious Call, Wesley wrote:

> ...although I was much offended at many parts of exceeding height and breadth and depth of the Law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that everything appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying Him as I had never done before.[25]

Another strong mystical influence upon Wesley was the reading of Rules and Exercises of Holy Living in 1725, upon the invitation of a deeply pious friend, Betty Kirkham. More will be said in relation to his ascetic practices as derived from Jeremy Taylor, but this saint of the Church directly influenced Wesley in his mystical views. The following are some of the rules that Jeremy Taylor advised for deep contemplation upon God.

> Think often of God's omnipresence.
> Let everything you see represent the excellency and power of God.
> In retirement, speak frequently with God.
> Offer acts of love and fear to God.
> Walk as in God's presence--contemplate Him.
> Remember God is in thy brethren--treat them as such.[26]

Wesley began to arduously follow these rules, and throughout his life they characterized his actions and ideals.

Wesley, the Evangelical Mystic

John Wesley reached a climax in his life upon his return from his painful and unsuccessful trip to Georgia. He came home a failure--a new experience for this brilliant young clergyman, for he had always been at the top of his class and a leader among his colleagues. John accused himself of unbelief, pride, gross fears, levity and luxuriancy of spirit; and of many words in his speech which were unedifying. This extremely self-disciplined man was extremely liberal in the condemnation of himself. He feared he was unsaved, and then he was not sure, writing:

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[24] *Loc. cit.*

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 19 (Quoted from George Eayrs' *Letters of John Wesley*).

[26] Jeremy Taylor, *Rules and Exercises of Holy Living*, pp. 30 f.

> I think verily if the gospel be true, I am safe; for I not only have given and do give all my goods to feed the poor; I not only give my body to be burnt, drowned...but I follow after charity (though not as I ought, yet as I can), if haply I may attain it...I show my faith by my works, by staking my all upon it.[27]

Not only was he uncertain about his salvation, but his doctrinal beliefs and opinions were sadly confused. Over ten years had passed since he had received his Master's degree from Oxford and yet his faith was seemingly grounded in sand. Ten years before, he had taken his mother's suggestion and undertook a serious self-examination, "to find whether he had 'a reasonable hope of salvation.'"[28] Her advice to him at the time was that assurance was through human attainment rather than a divine gift. Now after a decade, he was searching again in introspection, and was not satisfied with what he found. As to his doctrinal beliefs, he sadly admitted, "For many years I have been tossed about by various winds of doctrine. I asked long ago, 'What must I do to be saved?'"[29] He had been advised to not lay too much emphasis upon faith without works, and attempted to follow this by his many outward works. He was also warned against too many works, thus falling into the pit of the Roman Catholics, and here he also failed, for he was wholly depending upon human endeavors for his salvation. He disparaged Calvinistic doctrine in writing: "...I fell among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, who magnified faith to such an amazing size, that it hid all the rest of the commandments."[30] He considered the Lutherans and Calvinists had plunged into the other extreme denying the value of works, and called them "these well-meaning wrong-headed Germans."[31] And so Wesley went too far in the other extreme, failing for thirteen years to find the golden mean between Calvinism and Papism. Soon Wesley, by "extending antiquity too far;...believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient Church than ever were so,"[32] was falling into the tenets of monastic Mysticism.

Wesley wrote of his gradual withdrawal into the extremes of Mysticism. This description was written after his conversion, when he realized the precarious position of his former beliefs.

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[27] Southey, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
[28] Tenney, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
[29] Southey, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
[30] *Loc. cit.*
[31] *Loc. cit.*
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

> These considerations insensibly stole upon me as I grew acquainted with the mystic writers, whose noble descriptions of union with God and internal religion made everything else appear mean, flat, and insiped. But in truth they made good works appear so too: yea, and faith itself, and what not? They gave me an entire new view of religion, like any I had before. But alas! it was nothing like that religion which Christ and His apostles loved and taught...I had no heart, no vigour, no zeal in obeying, continually doubting whether I was right or wrong, and never out of perplexities and entanglements.[33]

After forsaking Mysticism, Wesley considered it his worst enemy, and doing so, took an extreme attitude toward it. He expressed this attitude in writing:

> ...Nor can I at this hour give a distinct account how or when I came a little back toward the right way; only my present sense is this, all the other enemies of Christianity are triflers, the mystics are the most dangerous; they stab it in the vitals, and its most serious professors are most likely to fall by them.[34]

Although Wesley repudiated the appellation of Mysticism, as a trichotomist, he viewed the spirit as the highest principle of man. This immortal spirit was the channel uniting man with God in faith. He believed God might send His Spirit directly and immediately into the soul of man. This is Scriptural Mysticism, therefore, it was the extremes of the radical mystics whom Wesley criticized in severe denouncement.

> If a Mystic is one who denied justification by faith,...who taught that God was insusceptible of anger and that the work of God in the soul was best promoted by anguish and by spiritual martyrdoms by occasional absences of God; that joy in the Spirit was not to be indulged in nor God to be selfishly loved; who was guided solely by inward impressions and not by the written Word; who advised retirement and entire seclusion from men; who strove to fulfill the law by passivity...then Wesley's assertion that he was not to be numbered among them must be

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[33] *Loc. cit.*

[34] John Wesley, *The Journal of John Wesley* Standard Edition, I, p. 420.

accepted.[35]

Even though Wesley discredits Mysticism completely as a "snake in the grass" of Christian doctrine that will poison the seeker, his conversion was a wonderful experience in which he sensed the Scriptural witness of salvation by faith. It was the inner mystical experience of the heart for which he expressed his desire "...of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved."[36] Being strongly influenced by the German, Peter Boehler, Wesley asked him if it would not be wise to quit preaching, since he felt that he did not possess the assurance that he felt was scripturally accessible. Boehler advised him, "Preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach faith."[37] Consequently, even though he did not possess this mysterious experience, and did not know how faith could be obtained instantly, he began to preach salvation by faith. Finally, on May 24, 1738, Wesley discarded the extremes of Mysticism in the scriptural epitome of the finest expression of mystical thought in Christian assurance. He met with a small group at Aldersgate Street, and was listening to the reading of Luther's preface to the Romans. He wrote in his diary the glorious account of the fruition of his new-found faith.

> About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed; I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.[38]

He did not experience an exuberant ecstacy of joy in his conversion, as many of his converts manifested, but "His response was more intellectual than emotional"[39] in accordance with his personality. Far more important than a jumping spree or a tickling of his emotions, "...was the profound and abiding consciousness of the reality of God and spiritual values, which now possessed him and supplied the dynamic that had been missing."[40]

It is evident that "Wesley was more influenced by Mysticism than he was aware, for mystical ideas had filtered into the

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[35] Arthur Wilford Nagler, *Pietism and Methodism*, p. 94.
[36] Wesley, *op. cit.* , p. 14.
[37] *Loc. cit.*
[38] *Ibid.* , p. 475.
[39] Tenney, *op. cit.* p. 95.
[40] *Loc. cit.*

better religious life of his age from many sources."[41] Mysticism has in all ages been a reaction against superstitious dependence upon humanistic grounds of Christian certitude. Thus, both Mysticism and Methodism build upon the foundation of conscious spiritual experience and its certitude within the heart. It is the doctrine of assurance, and is not far removed from that of the "inner light" of the Quakers. It is universally sound.

> The faculty and action of the soul by which we have an immediate experience of objective reality, of the infinite and abiding, of a spirit not all unlike, yet distinct from our own, which penetrates and works within these our finite spirits and in the world at large, especially in human history... is met by the mystical and the directly operative element of religion.[42]

The Methodist insistence upon conversion is based in evangelical argument upon the existence of a faculty different from, and superior to reason. This quality superior to reason is the intuitive faculty, and in both Mysticism and Methodism it reigns supreme. The great mystic, Ruysbroeck, says, "Above all things, if we desire to enjoy God, or to experience eternal life within us, we must rise far above human reason, and enter God through Faith."[43] God works through this intuitive faculty in the conveyance of spiritual knowledge. In this, Methodism locks step with Mysticism. Wesley has always tried to steer clear of the danger of this, which is the disparagement of learning.

In the Christian's view of peace of soul, both Methodism and Mysticism touch the basic fact of spiritual consciousness, never more finely expressed than by the great mystic, St. Augustine, who in the opening page of his Confessions, wrote: "Thou has created us unto Thyself O God, and our heart finds no rest until it rests in Thee."[44] There is little difference in the words of the noted mystic writer, von Hugel, and a heart-warming hymn of Wesley in their essence.

> ...He it is who, however dimly yet directly, touches our souls and awakens them to that noblest, incurable

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41 Workman, *op. cit.* , p. 79.

42 *Ibid.* , p. 80 (Quoted from von Hugel, *The Mystical Element of Religion*, Vol. II, p. 390).

43 *Ibid.* , p. 81.

44 St. Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, p. 1.

> discontent with our own petty self and to that sense of thirst for the Infinite and Abiding, which articulates man's deepest requirement and characteristic: this is the first experience... without which all life, and life's centre, religion, are flat and dreary, vain and philistine.[45]

Wesley also pens the beauty of his thought in deep contemplation and devotion to God.

> Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
> Whose depth unfathomed no man knows,
> I see from far Thy beauteous light,
> Only I sigh for Thy repose;
> My heart is pained, nor can it be
> At rest, till it finds rest in Thee.[46]

There are, however, some differences as well as likenesses between the essential qualities of Methodism and the mystical groups of the more popular varieties. The following are two qualities of the mystical which is basic to Methodism. First is ineffability, which is the state of feeling directly experienced and non-impartible to others. The experience of salvation and the daily walk with God are unique to each individual. The second is the noetic quality. This includes states of insight into depth of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. These demonstrate the doctrine of Assurance. There are also two more characteristics of Mysticism which are unique to that group, but have little place in Methodism. The first is transiency which is a more abnormal state, which Paul probably referred to as the third heaven. Methodism is not opposed to this, but little transiency occurs in its movement. Finally, where Methodism and Mysticism part company entirely is in the passivity of the Friends. Wesley abhorred this practice among the Quakers and excluded it from his practice among his societies. It is the doctrine of "Stillness," which is a do-nothing negative attitude. However, Wesley did encourage the tranquil tarrying before the Lord and the spiritual quiet, which was a contribution of the Friends of God and later the Quakers, but Wesley took a mean between the extremes of this "quietism" and the radical expression of the non-intellectual Ranters. Another difference might be considered--the verbal testimony of God's grace imparted in the life of believers. Tauler thought that the experience of close worship with God was indescribable and non-tellable. No one was

[45] Workman, *op. cit.*, p. 82 f. [46] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

allowed to witness in words to what he felt in his heart. But Wesley took issue in the admonition of these lines:

> What we have felt and seen
> With confidence we tell;
> And publish to the sons of men
> The signs infallible.[47]

Wesley also opposed the antinomian views of the Friends, as has already been mentioned, and their emphases upon seclusion solitude, and unsocial forms or religious expression. Although Wesley thought Mysticism was bound up with obscurity and irrationality, his doctrine had the following mystical elements in it: 1. Immediacy of first-hand religious experience; 2. Man has a sense other than reason by which he comes into relation with the Infinite; 3. Conversion re-establishes a vital union of the soul with God which sin had dissolved; 4. Illumination comes after purgation; 5. The "Inner Light" universal and preventing grace; and finally, 6. The scriptural doctrine of Hebrews that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:4).

Both of these movements have been sneered at as philosophical empiricism and a sentimental religion. Wesley despised this last accusation the worst, for he was anything but a sentimentalistic enthusiast. Mysticism has in the past and will be in the future

> ...the ferment of faith, the forerunner of spiritual liberty, the inaccessible refuge of the nobler heretics, the teacher of the despairing, the comforter of those who are weary of finitude.[48]

Thus, the truths of genuine Mysticism neither grow old or die. In her unity with a sane and sensible Mysticism, Methodism will always have a most powerful weapon in the fight against the increasing materialism of thought and life.

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47 *Ibid.*, p. 84.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 87 (Quoted from J. Royce, *The World and the Individual*, pp. 81-85).

The Theodicy of John Wesley

G. F. Hubbartt

From time immemorial to the present theologians have debated the question of theodicy, by which is meant the justification of divine providence, the reconciliation of the existence of evil with the goodness and sovereignty of God. It is not surprising then to find that John Wesley attempts a solution to this problem in his sermon entitled "God's Love to Fallen Man," using as his text Romans 5:15: "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift."

Near the beginning of the sermon Wesley declares that it is exceedingly strange that hardly anything had been written on the subject. This is a bit surprising from a man so well read as the founder of Methodism. The question was raised in Job, it was debated by Plato and the Stoics, by Plotinus, Augustine, Giordano Bruno and Jakob Boehme, all of whom lived before Wesley's day. The matter was raised by Kant and Hegel, who were more or less contemporary with him. Could it be to one of these Wesley refers when he writes in the sermon "that plausible account of the origin of evil, published to the world some years ago, and supposed to be unanswerable: that, 'it naturally results from the nature of matter, which God was not able to alter'? It is very kind of this sweet-tongued orator to make an excuse for God! But there is really no occasion for it: God hath answered for himself."

Wesley follows by stating that man abused his liberty, produced evil; brought pain into the world. This God permitted in order to bring forth a fuller manifestation of his wisdom, justice and mercy, to bestow an infinitely greater happiness than could have been obtained unless Adam had fallen. But let us permit Wesley to develop his own argument.

He opens by saying there has been more happiness and holiness in the world than there could have been had not Adam sinned, for, then, Christ would not have died, thus, not showing his amazing love to mankind, as an Advocate with the Father. There could have been no justification by faith and no re-

demption in the blood of Christ; he could not have been made God to us. Further, there would have been no room for love; we could not have known the power of the resurrection, nor the love of the Holy Spirit. The tragic error of our first parents opened the way for God's Son to die for us, and without this we would have lost the motive of brotherly love.

The entrance of evil into the world became the cause of suffering, yet, what are called "afflictions" in the language of men are, in the thought of God, blessings. If there had been no suffering then one of the most excellent parts of our religion would have been missing. It bequeaths the noblest of all Christian graces, love enduring all things, the ground of resignation to God. The sight worthy of God is to see a man struggling with adversity, and superior to it. By affliction our faith is tried, made acceptable to God.

By the coming of evil we cultivate the quieter virtues: patience, meekness, gentleness, longsuffering; otherwise, there would have been no returning good for evil. Adam's fall gave all posterity the opportunity of exercising the passive virtues and doing good in numberless instances, for, the more good we do the happier we will be.

If Adam had not fallen, then each individual would have been personally responsible for his wrongdoing to God; but by the death of Christ, to break the power of evil, every man now rests on the covenant of grace. By the Fall, God was compelled to send his Son into the world, otherwise we could not have known Christ in the flesh. By the birth, life and death of our Lord we have come to know the "unsearchable riches of Christ." Mercy now rejoices over judgment.

Having canvassed the earthly virtues that Wesley considers to have come through evil, he now proceeds to delineate the eternal values so derived. The most holy are those who have most successfully opposed sin, thus, they will shine brightest in heaven. Evil brought a train of woe which God's children have helped to combat by their good works, the reward for which they will receive in heaven. Wickedness entails suffering, but those who suffer with Christ shall also reign with him.

To sum up, and in conclusion, Wesley preaches that God permitted Adam's transgression in order that he might more fully manifest his wisdom, justice and mercy. By mankind conquering wickedness through the merits of Christ's death, the race has found a source of greater holiness and happiness than it could otherwise have known. While the ways of God may be unsearchable to us we can discern the general scheme

of the divine plan running through all eternity.

It seems surprising that Wesley, so well versed in Scripture, did not see his argument answered from the Book. It is only necessary to refer to two texts: Romans 9:14, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." Galatians 2:17b, "Is Christ therefore the minister of sin? God forbid." Other verses could be cited.

But let Dr. Daniel Curry in an editorial in The Methodist Review, November, 1888, answer the founder of Methodism.

> John Wesley theodicy is a theological heresy, an unconscious variation from the truth. The doctrine of sin as taught in Sermon LXIV is obnoxious in its accumulated assumptions, a perversion of the Scriptures adduced to support it, and if adopted as explanatory of the world's irregularities must logically legitimate man's disaster and render atonement unnecessary and void, or a makeshift for mischief which might have been prevented. To declare the "unspeakable advantage" of the Fall, to speculate on the innumerable benefits of natural and moral evil; to condemn our repining of Adam's transgression as the source of earth's woes; and to insist that man should glorify God because He instituted sin as the instrument of suffering, and by suffering of final elevation, is a doctrine to be rejected.... If evil is constitutionally or instrumentally good, or it can be established that a sinful world is provisionally happier, it might be well to introduce the disciplinary regime of sin among the angels, for they are imperfect and distant from the perfections of God. A whiff of polluted atmosphere might sweep over the hills of immortality to good effect upon those who inhabit the heights....Sin is the essentia opposition to God, He hates it, we hate it, and any defense of it savors of the pit whence it came.

Professor M. W. Terry, former professor of Christian Doctrine in Garrett Biblical Institute, commenting on the theodicy of Job, states that the book leaves the problem unsolved. In fact, it may not be successfully thought out by man. Many writers could be quoted as to the difficulty of finding a solution for evil. I like a line from Bernard Bosanquet, the English philosopher, in which he states, "This world is a place of soul making." W. N. Clarke in his Outline of Christian

Doctrine observes, "This world is only a cradle of souls, the earliest school of an endless life." What we do not know here and now may be revealed to us in the hereafter when God makes all things plain.

The Idea of Sin in the Theology of John Newton

Donald E. Demaray

At the early age of eleven, John Newton went to sea at the command of his father. By the time he was fifteen years of age he had made several voyages. "During this period. . . he learned to curse and blaspheme, and was exceedingly wicked."[1] But the death of a friend served to awaken him and for two years he attempted to reform, chiefly by an ascetic type of discipline. It was not long, however, until, as Newton says, "I renounced the hopes and comfort of the gospel, when every other hope was to fail me."[2]

The habit of swearing was so deeply ingrained in John Newton that it was habitual with him. Furthermore, he renounced his belief in God and classed himself as an infidel. Yet, in his own strength he tried to reform from time to time. In fact, vacillation between willful participation in sin and attempted reform was the chief characteristic of Newton's moral life up to the time Josiah Bull terms the "turning-point"--an awful storm at sea in March of 1748. From then on Newton began to think seriously about the Christian gospel and its demands on his life.

Looking back on this experience of the storm at sea and his conversion, Newton wrote in the language of hymnody, the fact of his personal sinfulness and God's grace:

> Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
> That saved a wretch like me!
> I once was lost, but now am found,
> Was blind, but now I see.
>
> 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
> And grace my fears relieved;

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[1] Josiah Bull, *John Newton of Olney and St. Mary Woolnoth. An Autobiography and Narrative, etc.*, p. 13.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

This last quoted verse points up not only the dangers in that storm at sea in March, 1748, but a host of other experiences. The slave trade of which he was a part for so long, was a sinful, depraved social practice of his day, and it was dangerous. How often the slaves in the chain rebelled, throwing the captain and crew overboard! Newton knew all too well the sinful sources of irritation behind such rebellion. Years later he wrote and preached against slavery calling it "that unhappy and disgraceful branch of commerce."[3] A friend of Newton's is reported to have said that "he never spent one half-hour in Newton's company without hearing some allusion to slavery and to Newton's remorse for his early share in the trade."[4]

Experience and the Fact of Sin

It is out of this wretched experience of sin that Newton preaches about it. Sin was no mere theological idea which had somehow to fit into a system of thought! Anything but that! Sin was real; it was a fact. How Newton must have despised the popular deistic concept of sin in his own day, that "Whatever is, is right,"[5] and that sin is not really to be taken seriously. To Newton it was incredible that sin should be taken any other way than seriously. But the fact is that eighteenth century Deism flatly denied the existence of sin and evil in the world, and said that "man is not vile, but exactly what he should be."[6]

Perhaps Newton fought this notion even more than Wesley because of his own bitter experiences in sin. How clearly does Newton paint the fact of sin in his hymn entitled "A Sick Soul":

Physician of my sin-sick soul,
To thee I bring my case;

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[3] *Works*, vol. VI, p. 521, from "Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade." (Third edition, 1824, *Works* in six volumes.)
[4] Bernard Martin, *John Newton*, p. 55.
[5] Pope from his "Essay on Man."
[6] Basil Willey, *The Eighteenth Century Background*, p. 46.

My raging malady control,
And heal me by thy grace.

Pity the anguish I endure,
See how I mourn and pine;
For never can I hope a cure
From any hand but thine.

I would disclose my whole complaint,
But where shall I begin
No words of mine can fully paint
That worst distemper, sin.[7]

Pride and the Nature of Sin

Referring to the Garden of Eden story, Newton says that the root of Adam's sin was pride:

Compell'd to answer to his name,
With stubbornness and pride,
He cast on God himself the blame;
Nor once for mercy cry'd.[8]

The creature put himself in the place of the Creator; he wanted to take the place of God. Thus the unbelief and rebellion of Adam--and of us too, for we, like Adam of old, are also proud--points to pride as the essence and origin of sin. Man is more interested in fulfilling his own wishes than in obeying God's commands.

In pin-pointing pride as the real nature or essence of sin, Newton follows in the Augustinian tradition. Man's "fall was due to pride, the greatest of all sins, which means putting of self before God and the denial of one's absolute dependence on him."[9] So A. C. McGiffert's description of Augustine's position.

Suffering and the Results of Sin

Newton speaks of the "bitter fruits" of sin. What does he mean by this expression? He has direct reference to death and suffering. It was John Newton's belief that with the advent

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[7] *Olney Hymns*, Book I, 83.
[8] *Ibid.*, Book I, number 1.
[9] A. C. McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought*, vol. II, p. 90.

of Adam's sin, two kinds of death were introduced into the world: spiritual and physical. Originally man possessed "a spiritual and divine life; for he was created in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness."[10] But "this moral image . . . was totally lost by sin. In that sense, he died the day, the moment, he ate the forbidden fruit."[11] Adam had deprived himself of the presence of God; he lost his former feeling of "at-homeness" with deity. "He no longer desired, he no longer could bear, the presence of his offended Maker."[12] He was dead spiritually! Now fear and anxiety took the place of serenity in the human soul, and ignorance and guilt replaced innocence and knowledge of God.

If Adam's sin meant the coming of spiritual death, it also meant the ushering in of physical death and natural evil. Subsequent to the Fall life became a struggle on the road which leads to physical death. "Sin is the cause of all the labour, sickness, and pain. . ."[13] "Sin has brought us all under a sentence of death . . ."[14] Man had been warned that, "In the day that thou eatest--thou shalt surely die."

Once again, this was no mere theory in the thought of John Newton. Again and again, from pulpit and in living room conversation, Newton warned his people of the tragic results of sin. Every New Year's day he held a service for his young people and he spent a good deal of time in prayer and preparation for that service; he always warned his young friends about the tragic results of sin. Sin always causes pain, suffering, and unhappiness, he announced.

Christ and the Cure of Sin

Newton never ceased to be amazed at the grace of God operative in the converted personality. He sang about it, he preached about it, he was a living example of God's grace. God was available through Jesus Christ. To paint the horrid picture of sin in human experience served only one purpose, to point to the cure of sin in a Person, Jesus Christ, who offered grace and forgiveness.

Now the cross was no mere unfortunate incident in history. No indeed! The cross made possible redemption from sin. Though God allowed evil and sin to enter the world, he also

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[10] *Works*, vol. IV, p. 462.
[11] *Works*, vol. I, p. 576.
[12] *Works*, vol. IV, p. 435.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 461.
[14] *Works*, vol. II, p. 433.

sent his Son into the world "to restore us to the favour of God; to reconcile us to ourselves, and to each other; to give us peace and joy in life, hope and triumph in death, and after death glory, honour and immortality."[15] So moved is Newton by the place of the cross in redeeming man, that he sings:

> When on the cross my Lord I see,
> Bleeding to death for wretched me,
> Satan and sin no more can move,
> For I am all transform'd to love.[16]

John Newton's doctrine of the cross points up his purposive Christology, and any doctrine which negated this purposive Christology he abhorred. Thus he could not accept the deistic statement of man's nature, which indicated that man "no longer" needs to "foster any gloomy conviction of sin, nor any enthusiastic yearning for salvation,[17] because he is in himself good and possesses the capabilities of being good." If this be true, then there is no need for Jesus Christ and His work. Contrary to the deistic position, Newton holds that the "idea of deliverance presupposes a state of distress. . .," and that the purpose of Christ's "appearance in the world" was "'to save sinners,'"[18] This "was the sole design of his advent . . .,"[19] which Newton sees prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New. It follows that Jesus Christ occupies a place in history not as a mere man who lived and died in a certain period, but as the One who fulfilled God's purpose for mankind by his mighty acts which culminated in providing salvation from sin.

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15 *Ibid.* , p. 284.
16 *Olney Hymns* , Book II, number 54.
17 Basil Willey, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
18 *Works* , vol. II, p. 282.
19 *Ibid.* , p. 284.

The Christology of Karl Barth

Kenneth S. Kantzer

As with most contemporary theologians, the theology of Barth is avowedly Christo-centric. For Barth, at least, this does not mean that the topics of theology are limited to a study of the person and work of Christ, but rather that all theology finds its focal center in Christ, and that all knowledge of God is obtainable only through Christ.[1]

Barth insists, moreover, that the person of Christ and the work of Christ cannot be discussed separately. Liberals who speculated about the abstract person of Christ soon came to doubt the necessity for a doctrine of the God-man. The study of the person of Christ, therefore, must be embedded in a context of a study of the work of Christ for our salvation. It is in this work that we recognize his deity, and it is in this work that we see the significance and importance of a doctrine of the deity of Christ.[2]

The presupposition of the incarnation of Christ is the pre-existent logos and the Christian doctrine of the trinity. According to Barth God exists eternally in three modes. This is not Sabellianism, for the modes are not revelatory modes but modes lying eternally in the ultimate being of God. The incarnation of Christ is an incarnation of the whole Godhead but by means of an incarnation of the second mode of God to whom has been peculiarly appropriated the task of redemption.[3]

Barth's statement of the virgin birth is very clear. He writes, "The incarnation of the Son of God out of Mary cannot indeed consist of the origination for the first time here and now of the Son of God, but it consists of the Son of God taking to himself here and now this other thing which exists previously in Mary, namely flesh, humanity, human nature, humanness." It claims that the man Jesus has no father

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[1] *Church Dogmatics*, IV, 1, 123.
[2] *Ibid.*, IV, 1, 123-125. [3] *Ibid.*, I, 1, 484 ff.; 495.

(exactly in the way in which as the Son of God he has no mother).[4]

The real purpose of the virgin birth is not to account for Jesus' sinlessness, nor even to explain the deity of Christ. It is rather a sign which stresses the humanness of Christ. The particular virtue of the virgin birth is that it stresses clearly that man himself does not cooperate in the work of redemption carried on by the second mode of the Godhead.[5]

The formula "Mary, Mother of God" Barth defends as a safeguard against Nestorianism. The phrase, however, is not particularly happy because it has led in modern times to the Roman church's glorification of Mary. The virgin birth, therefore, the reality of which points to the lack of all human work in salvation, has led by Roman exaltation of Mary to a stress upon human participation in salvation.[6]

The reality of the human nature of Christ is guaranteed not only by the virgin birth, but also by the clear gospel record of the full humanity of Christ. Barth repudiates all forms of Docetism and Apollinarianism as doing less than justice to the Biblical records.[7] The humanity he ascribes to Jesus Christ, however, is no "speculative humanity." Man does not first figure out what is humanity and then discover Jesus Christ to be that thing, but he discovers in Jesus Christ what is really humanity.[8]

Barth's testimony to the sinlessness of Christ is somewhat ambiguous. In his early Commentary on Romans he had declared that Jesus stood as a "sinner among sinners."[9] This is sharpened in his dogmatics to the explanation that in becoming flesh Jesus partook of a sinful human nature, but that Jesus never actually sinned. As the eternal Son of God, sin is actually impossible to Christ.[10] In his most recent work this is further toned down to the "weakness" of sinful flesh. His sinlessness as the God-man, in any case, consisted of his overcoming the sinful fleshly nature which he had assumed. In spite of the reality of his temptation he refused to sin, and by his death upon the cross in obedience to the will of the Father he triumphed over sin.[11]

The true divinity of Christ is affirmed again and again by

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[4] *Ibid.*, I, 1, 556.
[5] *Ibid.*, I, 2, 177, 193, 211.
[6] *Ibid.*, I, 2, 138-140.
[7] *Ibid.*, I, 2, 172 ff.
[8] *Ibid.*, IV, 1, 131.
[9] *The Epistle to the Romans*, 97.
[10] *Church Dogmatics*, I, 2, 150 ff.
[11] *Ibid.*, IV, 1, 159, 234, 252; I, 2, 150 ff.

Barth. Jesus is "very God of very God," he argues. He was possessed even in his earthly life, even as a baby of Bethlehem, even in his death on the cross, of all the divine attributes. Never at any moment did the person of Christ cease to be God or limit in any way the fullness of his deity.[12]

In endeavoring to unfold the interrelationships between the two natures of Christ, Barth argues that the New Testament statements on the divinity of Christ cannot possibly be interpreted in any sub-Chalcedonian fashion. They speak neither of a human being who subsequently was exalted to divinity (Ebionism), nor of one who appeared among us as the mere personification and symbol of a divine being (Docetism). Barth defends strongly the Niceano-Constantinopolitan, and the later Chalcedonian, formulas setting forth two natures united in the one person of Christ. He rejects explicitly all the historic formal heresies in the ancient church.[13]

In his discussion of the communication of the attributes of Christ he tries to hold a middle point between traditional Lutheranism and traditional Calvinism. Lutherans, he argues, are right on their main point that it is the divine and human Christ who is omnipresent, but they are in constant danger of slipping into Eutychianism. Calvinists, on the other hand, are right in their main point that the natures are not to be confused, but they slip constantly into the danger of Nestorianism. The solution is to be found, so Barth avers, in the idea that the body of Christ is present everywhere but in a different sense from that in which the deity of Christ is omnipresent. Precisely what constitutes this difference, Barth does not explain.[14]

Over the much-mooted phrase "impersonal humanity," Barth passes favorable judgment. What is really intended here; he asserts, is soundly biblical. The humanity of Christ in its individuality never existed except in personal conjunction with the eternal God. The "Son of God became man" must be interpreted the "Son of God assumed human nature."[15]

As to the "extra-Calvinisticum" Barth feels that the controversy was really a tempest in a teapot. The Lutheran argument that the logos exists only in conjunction with the flesh is correct unless one means, as some Lutherans almost seem to

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12 *Ibid.*, I, 1, 475; IV, 1, 126, 128, 180.
13 *Ibid.*, I, 1, 484 ff.; I, 2, 122 ff.
14 *Ibid.*, I, 2, 161, 162; II,1, 488 ff.
15 *Ibid.*, I, 2, 163 ff.

say, that the humanity absorbs all the deity of Christ. The Calvinists were right when they said that the logos was not exhausted in the fleshly existence, but no Calvinist meant to deny that the whole logos is actually joined to human flesh.[16]

With respect to the "incognito" of Christ, Barth affirmed that even in his becoming flesh God still remains hidden. We have in Christ God for us, not God as he is in himself. By some, this is interpreted to mean that for Barth all our statements about Christ have no correspondence to objective reality. I interpret this only to be an extreme statement of the purely analogical nature of all human thought about God (since rational evidences are not an adequate ground of faith), not merely because man, as a sinner, is properly incapable of evidences, but also because the objective evidences in themselves do not exist.[17]

Though in his earlier works Barth makes disparaging statements about the importance of Christ's bodily resurrection,[18] in his Church Dogmatics he makes plain that he accepts a bodily resurrection on the third day. For him, the empty tomb is an historical fact, but belief in the deity of Christ is not grounded in the bodily resurrection as evidence or proof. The bodily resurrection is none-the-less significant because it is the sign that in Christ it is the ever-living God who acts. Without the resurrection, therefore, the Christian would be without hope.[19]

The appearances of Christ continued for forty days just as the biblical narrative reports. The details of Scripture are in some places contradictory, he thinks, and need not be accepted in full, but the witness of the gospel to a post-resurrection ministry of Christ must be accepted. These appearances are not spiritual or psychic, but neither are they explainable in the terms of modern physics. We are to accept the biblical testimony as it stands, so Barth affirms, and we are not to speculate about details.[20]

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[16] *Ibid.* , I, 2, 168 ff; IV, 1, 180.

[17] *Ibid.* , IV, 1, 176. This objective hiddenness of the humanity of Christ as over against a merely subjective hiddenness to sinful men represents one of the crucial differences between Barth and classical Protestant orthodoxy. See Cornelius Van Til, *Has Karl Barth Become Orthodox? passim.*

[18] *The Epistle to the Romans,* 204; and *The Resurrection of the Dead,* 135.

[19] *Church Dogmatics,* I, 2, 182; IV, 1, 340, 341, 728.

[20] *Ibid.* , IV, 1, 318, 351, 352, *et passim.*

Following his post-resurrection ministry Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father. There he remains in a state of exaltation while his work is carried on amongst men through the Holy Spirit. This continues until the end of time when Christ will return.[21]

The relationship of Christ, the living Word, to Scripture, the written Word, is that between revelation and record or testimony to revelation. The primary Word of God is Christ alone. He is not so much an act of God as God-acting. The Bible gives us an inspired record of Jesus Christ and is normative for all Christian witnessing. It functions today as the Word of God when the Spirit brings the individual man, the believer, into acquaintanceship with Jesus Christ through this written Word. When man individually and personally does not meet Christ where the church testifies that it has met him in the past, namely, in the Bible, man must wait in humility and expectation that he too may find Christ where Christ has willed himself to be found.[22]

The preached word is man's attempt to bear witness to Christ. This is done as man conforms his witness to the testimony of Scripture.[23]

The relationship of the God-man to the atonement is inescapable. Christianity is not a religion of Christ and does not present a gospel of Christ, but rather presents a gospel about Christ and his redemption. This redemption is possible only because of who Christ is. The miracle of reconciliation, Barth declares, cannot be the work of a super- or a demi-god. The character of almighty grace demands the acknowledgement that its subject be identical with God in the full sense of the word. The work of the atonement is a substitutionary work of Christ in behalf and instead of sinful man. It is not so much a substitutionary satisfaction, however, as it is a substituted victory and a substituted repentance of Christ instead of the believer.[24]

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21 *Ibid.* , IV, 1, 132, 730, 731.

22 *Das Christliche Verständnis der Offenbarung*, 8 ff.; and *Church Dogmatics*, I, 2, 457 ff.

23 *Church Dogmatics*, I, 1, 98 ff.; I, 2, 812 ff.

24 *Ibid.* , IV, 1, 484, *et passim.*

Wesleyan Methodist Church in Australia

James M. Ridgway

Introduction

Evangelicalism in Australia has developed along definitely non-denominational lines. Due to the liberalism of the "established" denominations, evangelicals have tended to regard denominationalism and theological liberalism as synonymous. This has resulted in a growth of independent or so-called "inter-denominational" fellowship and missionary movements among evangelicals. These movements, however, have not directed their work of evangelizing through the local church; but have stressed foreign missions to the virtual exclusion of home missions. A further significant characteristic of evangelicalism in Australia has been its emphatic Calvinism. Now it was in this clime of Calvinistic and non-denominational evangelicalism on the one hand, and liberal denominationalism on the other hand, that the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America in Australia came into being.

Beginning Amongst Misunderstanding and Ostracism (1945-1948)

After World War II (1945)

To Chaplain K. M. Ridgway, of the Royal Australian Air Force, the war brought two outstanding realizations. The first was an acute awareness of the spiritual poverty and ignorance of the mass of Australians. The second was a contact with the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America and the conviction that here was the opportunity to do something about the spiritual dearth of his homeland.

Through the testimony of an American soldier in which he gave definite and clear testimony to conversion and entire sanctification, Chaplain Ridgway first learned of Wesleyan Methodism. Attracted by the testimony, he determined to learn more about the soldier's church, and so wrote for in-

formation. After a careful study of the Discipline he said to his wife: "This is exactly what we believe, and the requirements of its discipline are based on the Scriptures throughout." Correspondence with the leaders of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in America ensued and resulted in a proposition by Chaplain Ridgway: Did the Wesleyans wish to commence work in Australia? If so, would they accept him as their field worker? The answer was affirmative, and in November, 1945, following his discharge from the Air Force, K. M. Ridgway became the official representative of Wesleyan Methodism in Australia.

In this way a movement that was not only evangelical, but denominational and Wesleyanic rather than Calvinistic, began in Australia.

Early Preparations (1946)

Services were begun in Flinders Lane in the heart of the city of Melbourne, and later transferred to a rented building in Moonee Ponds, a suburb of Melbourne. An aggressive program of street meetings, personal evangelism, and Sunday services resulted in a number of conversions. Contact was made with an evangelical group in Tasmania when Mr. Ridgway spoke at the Easter convention of "Ambassadors for Christ." The year culminated with a convention at Barwon Heads, Victoria, where a small group of interested folk met for prayer and Bible study. On December 23, Miss Grace Wood, a veteran Wesleyan Methodist missionary to India, arrived to assist in the infant work.

Organization (1947)

In February, Tuesday night meetings were held in the heart of Melbourne. They were designed to give those interested in "spreading Scriptural holiness across Australia" an opportunity to meet together and to become acquainted with Wesleyan Methodism. The numbers were small--usually in the twenties. Shortly thereafter, the charter members of the denomination were received and the church was organized.

That year services were begun in Carlton and Sunshine, suburbs of Melbourne; at Bendigo, one of the provincial cities of Victoria, where a disused church was purchased and Leslie Archbold was appointed pastor; and at Cohuna, a country

town located two hundred miles north of Melbourne.

In April, at the request of the Department of Home Missions, under which the Australia field was placed, Mr. Ridgway left for America to attend General Conference and to present the challenge of the new field.

> Brother Ridgway's visit was in the nature of a great triumph. He stirred the hearts of his congregations repeatedly with his eloquent messages. The Lord used this humble servant to arouse widespread interest and enthusiasm toward the new project--the 'baby Conference of Australia.'[1]

The response of the church was gratifying and resulted in generous prayer and financial interest on the part of the American church. But troubles had come to the home front, and on his return Mr. Ridgway found numbers disaffected. Thus began a period of real sifting and decimation.

Dr. J. R. Swauger visited the field in October to officially ratify the organization and to hold the first Conference. He observed on his arrival that

> Our numbers had decreased mightily... The discovery that old-fashioned holiness was not going to be popular among people had a decided effect on those who had at first been drawn by the novelty of the teaching rather than by a desire to accept its cleansing effects.[2]

At the conference session, which was held in a rented hall in the suburb of Seddon, it became evident that some of the brethren felt that the American control of the church was excessive. One of these withdrew to set up a rival church, but did not succeed.

Dr. Swauger's gracious spirit and anointed messages did much to encourage the faithful members of the church, and to attract newcomers to this strange "sect."

In November, a mansion with several acres was purchased for the sum of $6000 to be used as a Bible College and headquarters.

On his return, Dr. Swauger left a smaller nucleus of loyal members, but they were a group strengthened in their dedication to their appointed task, and with a clearer vision of their calling.

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[1] J. R. Swauger, *The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Australia*, p. 8.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Reinforcements (1948)

Early in the year, the headquarters building was opened as a hostel for single men working or studying in Melbourne. Two of the young men who came were so impressed by the radiant lives of those in charge that they soon joined the church and later entered her ministry.

During the year services were discontinued at Carlton, and transferred to a rented hall in Pascoe Vale, located three miles from the headquarters. "Peace Hall," as it was known locally, became the central meeting place of Wesleyan Methodism for a time.

On November 11, the Leo Cox family arrived from America to open the Bible college. Their arrival brought a new surge of enthusiasm to the workers; and the conference and camp meeting in December resulted in a number of encouraging conversions. Mr. Cox was elected president of the conference in Mr. Ridgway's place.

It remains to observe the reception accorded this baby work in these early days by the already existing religious organizations. As soon as it became clear that a new denomination had entered the field, opposition came from all quarters. Members were frequently informed by representatives of the established churches that there was neither need nor room for a new denomination. Evangelical acquaintances gave those who associated with the Wesleyans the "cold shoulder." Speakers at evangelical interdenominational conventions spoke against this new upsurge of "sinless perfectionism." The evangelical press was closed to the advertisements of the new "sect." In fact, the little group bent on spreading Scriptural holiness across Australia was made to feel very much unwanted, though never really unneeded.

The Period of Prejudice and Clarification (1949-1953)

Entrenchment (1949)

The outstanding event of the year was the opening of the Melbourne Wesleyan Bible College with three teachers: Rev. Leo Cox, Mrs. Esther Cox, and Rev. K. M. Ridgway, and seven full-time students. Other members of the staff were Miss Wood, and an Australian lady, Miss Bienvenue.

The need for the college had become evident as the work

progressed. Young people were feeling the call to the work. The leading "interdenominational" training school in Melbourne had taken an emphatic public stand against the Wesleyan position. So it became necessary to establish a school true to Wesleyan doctrine and polity for the training of the workers. At its inception, the college became the only Wesleyanic school on the continent.[3]

Services were begun in the college community during this year under the direction of President Cox, with the assistance of Miss Wood and George Randall. Miss Wood had previously laid a foundation of personal evangelism in the community and had pioneered the Sunday School.

In July, Miss Wood announced that her work in Australia was done, and in August sailed for her homeland. Thus ended almost three years of selfless and devoted labor by this saintly woman. The impact of her life on the community, on the leadership of the conference, and on the students and boarders at the college has been a lasting one. Her victorious spirit, gracious personality, sage counsel, sympathetic ear, anointed testimonies, strict standards, and life of prayerfulness set the pace for Australian Wesleyan Methodism. Dr. Swauger ably summed up her contribution to the foundation of the work thus:

> Her devotion to the cause knew no bounds. Her sacrifice was unlimited. Without thought of self, she simply went about doing good. Her unfeigned enthusiasm, her understanding sympathy, and her victorious attitudes, encouraged the rest of us time and time again.[4]

One of the notable contacts of the year was with Mr. Archibald Hughes, a respected teacher among the Plymouth Brethren Assemblies. He had come into the experience of entire sanctification soon after his conversion, and after a long period of Bible study had come to a Wesleyanic theology. Because of his Bible emphasis on the deeper life he was expelled from the Assemblies. Soon afterward he joined the Wesleyans and exerted a leading influence on her policy by becoming Mr. Cox's chief adviser. He brought to the teaching force of

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[3] The Church of the Nazarene, the only other Wesleyanic church in Australia, was organized about the same time as the Wesleyan Church, but did not open its training college until several years later.

[4] Swauger, *op. cit.*

the college careful biblical scholarship, though he lacked formal religious education himself.

Development (1950)

Cottage meetings were launched in three suburbs of Melbourne during the year, and two of them--at Balwyn and Highett--were to materialize into churches.

The student enrollment at the college reached fifteen during the year, and the students were active in promoting the cottage meetings.

The first youth camp was held in conjunction with the regular conference and camp meeting on the college campus. There were five organized churches reported that year--four in Melbourne, and one at Cohuna.

Consolidation (1951)

In April, Mr. Cox left the field in charge of Mr. Ridgway and returned to America for General Conference and deputational duties. His untiring representation of the needs and opportunities in Australia resulted in a budget grant by General Conference of twenty-five cents per member for the Australia work. This was equivalent to about $8000 a year. Hitherto the work had been supported by special offerings, but this had proved to be an impractical method. One-third of the budget receipts were apportioned to the support of the missionary, one-third to the College, and one-third to the Conference. The question of the apportionment was a difficult one, especially when all of the pastors found it necessary to work part-time in order to maintain their families on these pioneer charges. Eventually this financial problem resulted in the withdrawal of several from the church.

During the year Mr. Hughes took on the editorship of The Wesleyan Witness, a fortnightly magazine setting forth the Wesleyan message in both a polemic and an apologetic way.

The total membership of the denomination reached fifty-five, a gain of seven over the previous year. The number enrolled in the Sunday Schools was 557, with an average attendance of 310. There were six appointments, four elders, two conference preachers and eight local preachers.[5]

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[5] *Minutes* of the Australia Annual Conference (1951), pp. 19-22.

The year marked the graduation of the first students from the Bible College: James Ridgway, Charles Wilson, and William Morris. These men were soon active in the Conference and all are ordained elders of the church at the present time.

President Cox, in his annual report, stated:

> Although progress is slow, we can report an overall growth during the year. We have not added any new churches, but three of our churches show a gain in membership. We have started a new Sunday School at Highett, which shows promise of rapid growth. All of our other Sunday Schools have held steady, or shown an increase in interest and attendance. The Wesleyan Witness is being a great blessing in Australia and America...There were three men graduated from the Bible College.[6]

Clarification of Policy (1952)

An important outcome of the youth camp held in January was the enrollment of three new students in the Bible College. Prospects had not looked promising for the new school year, but enrollment day found eight students present. This was felt to be a definite answer to prayer, and the ministry of the Bible College was continued.

This year was to be a difficult one. Differences over methods caused a schism at Sunshine, and the former pastor launched an opposition work in the same community.

A certain tendency to independence and non-cooperation with the conference program in one of the churches caused considerable difficulty during the year. Hence the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Rufus Reisdorph, denominational representatives from America, was most timely. Mrs. Reisdorph brought great encouragement and blessing by her inspirational ministry. Dr. Reisdorph was able to analyze many of the problems the Conference faced and offered helpful counsel and information.

The Conference marked the beginning of a new era in the work. Up until this time, the policy had been to seek out a program similar to that carried on by the established churches, to follow the traditional "Australian" patterns. It became

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

clear, however, that there were certain invariables in an evangelical, holiness (Wesleyanic), democratic church which could not be sacrificed without a loss of identity. It was concluded that there were certain hall-marks of Wesleyan Methodism as regards worship and polity, without which she could not be effective in her ministry. This came as a new revelation to the Conference leaders, and from that time on those who rallied around the leadership were wholehearted in their support of the denominational program. The Balwyn church was not satisfied with the trend, and so with their pastor, the Rev. Hughes, eventually withdrew.

Leo Cox was elected president of the Conference, K. M. Ridgway, vice-president, and A. Carnell, secretary, treasurer. Aubrey Carnell and James Ridgway were ordained elders in the Conference. Mr. Carnell had completed the "Course of Study" and Mr. Ridgway had completed the Bible College course, becoming the first graduate of the school to be ordained.

Four elders, four conference preachers, and seven local preachers were listed in the Minutes of that year. The average salary paid the preachers by the local congregations and assisted by American funds was $590 for the year. A total of $1650 went into the local churches from this "Overseas Fund." Membership was reported as seventy, with 648 registered on the Sunday School rolls.[7]

Re-alignment (1953)

Aubrey Carnell, who had been pastor of the Cohuna church, replaced James Ridgway as pastor of the College church and took on the responsibility of the business administration of the College. He and his wife as the deans assumed a very strategic place in the school.

The work at Cohuna was closed and a mission church organized a few miles away at Dalton's Bridge under the superintendence of Keith Goulding, a layman. Charles Wilson replaced Mr. Ratcliffe at Sunshine, and James Ridgway was released for graduate studies in the United States of America. A gain of seven members over the previous year was realized. The total enrollment in the Sunday Schools dropped to 441. The number of tithing members was listed as twenty-seven.[8]

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[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 38-42.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

The return of the Coxes to America after the Conference of 1953 marked the end of their Australian labors. The Coxes had nobly stepped into a difficult and unmapped area of service and effectively established a pattern of faith, godliness, and procedure in the carrying on of the work of the Kingdom. In so doing, they frequently faced the opposition of those who resented so-called "Americanization," and likewise experienced that loneliness which accompanies isolated leadership. But God gave them grace and courage, and by their lives they vindicated the message they preached.

The Coxes were replaced by the Robert Mattke family from Wisconsin. Mr. Mattke took his theological training at Asbury Theological Seminary. He brought fresh vision and leadership to the Conference and the College.

Consolidation and Expansion (1954-1956)

Broadening the Program (1954)

Under the leadership of Mr. Mattke the Conference launched out on an expanding program. The church-building program was accelerated, and a more intensive promotional campaign was conducted both in Australia and America. The extended outreach through use of Gospel teams, the radio and press, together with timely financial assistance from the American church, brought considerable encouragement to the workers. Mr. Ridgway observed:

> It would seem that we have passed through the Winter of obloquy and suspicion and that Spring is coming... Several members who left us in the lean years have come back to humbly acknowledge they never should have left us... The old whispering-campaigns that our teachings are heterdox seem to have abated... Some of us are invited to join the councils of various groups... There is a steady growth of our Sunday Schools... our children's and youth camps are being blessedly used to gather in harvests of young souls... The average age of our members is under thirty years of age... The future of the church in Australia is as 'bright as the promises of God.'[9]

This new optimism was fanned by a fruitful revival at the

[9] *Wesleyan Missionary* (April, 1954), p. 16.

Sunshine church where there were twenty seekers; by the launching of a building program at Highett; by the graduation from the Bible College in December of seven students--the largest graduating class in the life of the school, and finally by the visit of the international president of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Dr. Roy S. Nicholson. Dr. Nicholson was employed in a full schedule of speaking engagements by the church and other evangelical bodies, and his ministry did much to commend the high character of the Wesleyan message to Australians.

Dr. Nicholson was struck by the unique religious atmosphere of Australia.

> There are many churches here, and also great division of spirit and contentions over minor matters between certain groups; as well as a definite fear of many who desire a genuinely spiritual ministry and message. There is much apathy toward religion by the masses of the Australian people.[10]

> Some of them /the evangelicals/ have been so disappointed at organized religion that they shrink from it in fear, and suspect that organizations aim to throttle the very message we have to deliver.[11]

The loss of a group from the Balwyn church was the main cause for a decrease in the membership by seventeen over the previous year. Conference membership was down to thirty-seven, and there were 566 enrolled in the Sunday Schools. Nevertheless, the year closed on a high note of optimism.

Building (1955)

Early in the new year, a door that had been opening for five years was entered. Mr. and Mrs. K. M. Ridgway left the pastorate at West Coburg and launched in faith the pioneering of work in Launceston, second largest city in the island state of Tasmania. By the end of the year Sunday Schools were being conducted in three different locations and central services were held in a rented hall. Cottage prayer meetings were conducted during the week. A tent meeting attracted up to 175 children for a service, but headway with the adults was slow.

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[10] *Wesleyan Methodist* (January 26, 1955), p. 51.

[11] *Ibid.* , (February 2, 1955), p. 67.

Two churches were built and dedicated during the year. The Highett church was completed with the help of American funds; Balwyn church was entirely the fruit of the local congregation's labor. The Lord sealed the dedication service when one family was received into membership, and there were nine seekers at the altar.

A spirit or thankfulness and optimism again prevailed at the Conference of 1955. There were three organized churches, and three mission churches. Membership had increased by fifteen, and giving by the churches totalled $8,375, showing an increase of $2,814 over the previous year.

Home-trained Personnel (1956)

The sudden death of Mrs. Ridgway following Conference of 1955 came as a great loss to the church. But the seed-sowing in Launceston was not in vain, for by the end of the year a vigorous church of fourteen members was organized under the leadership of Mr. Ridgway, and a suitable property purchased.

Of course, setbacks continued along the way. Mr. Ridgway wrote in April, 1957:

> Several are finding the way too narrow, and others are disaffected because we retain infant baptism in the Discipline, and allow women to speak! If only they would not major on minors and minor on majors there would be more hope of revival... Whilst we have lost some, others are coming in. Praise God! There is the usual whispering campaign against us--'sinless perfection'--but we are straight and open about what we believe and have nothing to preach but the old-time faith.[12]

But there were many encouragements. In his report on the Conference of 1956, Mr. Ridgway wrote as follows:

> We had a wonderful Conference, which closed in a blaze of glory. No place-seeking, all of one heart and soul, and all pushing ahead for the glory of God. We have a good team now--all but two pastors are graduates of the Bible College.[13]

The Bible College

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[12] Personal letter dated April, 1957.

[13] Personal letter dated January, 1957.

It is quite clear that there would hardly have been a chance for Wesleyan Methodism to survive the initial struggles for existence apart from the Bible College. Mr. Mattke makes this clear in one of his articles of 1955:

> Since its opening in 1949 the College has made a contribution to Wesleyan Methodism in Australia that cannot be computed in monetary terms...In its short history its students have come from fourteen different denominations or independent groups. The College has graduated twelve students. At the present time two of the former students are doing missionary work in New Guinea. Eight former students are doing pastoral work. Others are in nurse or mother-craft training.[14]

As the denominational headquarters, the College has been a morale builder, giving stability to the work; as a training school it has established laity and ministers in the fundamentals of the faith, and instilled into them a sense of mission to "spread Scriptural holiness" on the home and foreign fronts; and it has provided the church with a band of dedicated and loyal young men and women who are faithful to the message and mission of the church.

That the appeal of the College has been limited is not surprising. Until now it has been on trial, as any new institution is at its inception. Her clear espousal of the Wesleyan position has greatly limited her potential student appeal in a country basically Calvinistic in its evangelical theology. There is no academic recognition afforded Bible colleges in the Australian education system, and so her appeal is largely to those who already are sympathetic to, or at least interested in, the Wesleyan message.

Nevertheless, students are coming, and the College is filling a vital role in fitting them for fruitful service.

Conclusion

It cannot be truthfully said that the progress of Wesleyan Methodism in the "Land Down Under" has been spectacular. Far from it. But one cannot fail to be convinced that here is a vine of the Lord's planting--one which shows every promise of flourishing into great fruitfulness, under God.

In doctrine, polity, and ethic, she is a true daughter of the

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[14] *Wesleyan Methodist*, April and June, 1957.

parent church, and is making her contribution to the religious life of a needy Australia.

Her leaders are young men and women who have courageously taken their stand amidst ostracism and unpopularity, and have dedicated themselves to the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus." They are convinced that God's plan of salvation is "to the uttermost" and they are bent on reaching the religiously disillusioned and unchurched masses with this glorious message. And this they are seeking to do, not by hit-and-miss evangelism, but rather by way of the community church.

God grant that she may realize her divinely appointed mission!

Book Reviews

James D. Robertson, Ph.D., Book Review Editor

Flatland, by Edwin A. Abbott. New York: Dover Publications, seventh edition. 128 pp. Paper bound, $1.00.

It may seem strange that this small book, written seventy-five years ago and now in its seventh edition, in which a Shakespearean scholar and theologian deals with geometrical figures, a book praised by a science fiction magazine, should be of any significance for readers with theological interest. Yet it is not only pertinent, it is also fascinating reading.

"Flatland" is a land of only two dimensions. The inhabitants are geometrical planes--Triangles, Squares, Polygons, and Circles. Their perspective is the same as if one would cut out cardboard geometrical figures, place them on a table top, and look at them with one's eye at the level of the table. What we would call the plane surface of a Flatlander would never be visible to him or his countrymen; this is their "insides." They cannot conceive of a dimension of height.

The Square whose "memoirs" the book purports to be succeeds in leaving his world of length and width and visits Lineland, a world of only one dimension. Here all the inhabitants are Lines, longer or shorter, and the entire world is a single endless line. The inhabitants move in concert back and forth, never able to pass one another or to see anything more than the point which is the end of each adjacent neighbor. The Square endeavors to present the truth of two dimensions to the king of Lineland, but is scoffingly reminded that the sides of a Line are its "insides," and to expect anyone to be able to look in some direction other than back or forth is to expect him to have an eye in his stomach.

Later a Sphere, a representative of a world of three dimensions, appears in the Square's house, although to the Square he seems to be merely a Circle. When the Sphere moves up and down to illustrate his third dimension, the Square insists that he is only a Circle with a trickster's ability to increase

and decrease his diameter and to vanish altogether. To expect the Square to look in some inconceivable direction which the Sphere calls "up" is to expect him to have an eye in his stomach, and just as absurd.

It is only when the Sphere takes the Square bodily up out of his two-dimensional world that the Square is able to see that there is, somehow, a third dimension, height. He now sees that all of his city is open and visible from this third dimension, with no roofs or coverings on the buildings. He can actually see the "insides" of his fellow-citizens--that is, their plane surface.

Finally, thinking of the worlds of one, two, and now three dimensions, and the mathematical analogies by which the Sphere has explained these mysteries to him, the Square suggests that surely the Sphere can also lead him further, into a world of four dimensions. "Nonsense," replies the Sphere, The idea of more than three dimensions is absurd and unthinkable. But the Square is insistent. Remembering how the Sphere appeared in his house in a manner quite natural to that three-dimensional being but utterly inconceivable to the Square's two-dimensional perception, he asks the Sphere if it is not so that "ere now your countrymen also have witnessed the descent of Beings of a higher order than their own, entering closed rooms, even as your Lordship entered mine, without the opening of doors or windows, and appearing and vanishing at will?" (pp. 90,91).

Here, of course, is one of the tantalizing thoughts suggested by the book. Do heavenly beings utilize a fourth dimension--or more--which is beyond human comprehension just as a third dimension was to the Square and a second dimension to the Line? Is this how the resurrected Jesus appeared to the disciples when the doors were shut? This does not lessen the miracle, of course, but only suggests a possible basis upon which the miracle took place. It suggests, moreover, that what is impossible in one sphere of existence may be perfectly normal in a higher sphere. Further, is not the inability of the Line and the Square--and the Sphere?--to comprehend the possibility of a dimension beyond that of their own world analogous to the blindness whereby "the natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned"? Revelation, not reason, is required.

One helpful word to the reader: read the Introduction before, but read the Preface after, reading the book.

J. Harold Greenlee

Concerns of a Continent, edited by James W. Hoffman. New York: Friendship Press, 1958. 166 pp. $2.95.

This book is a compilation. The editor, James W. Hoffman, wrote the first and last chapters in which he surveyed the various areas of the North American continent together with the neighboring islands, and summarized the challenge of Christianity's second chance after its experiences in Europe. The other six chapters are analyses of the specific areas by men who are specially qualified in the respective fields.

Leonard M. Perryman, of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, described the geographical, social, political and religious situation in Alaska. Special emphasis was placed on the present challenge and the promise that Alaska may be a future stronghold of a virile Protestantism.

The chapter on Canada was done by A. C. Forrest, editor of the United Church Observer. By statistical studies he presented an encouraging report of the status of Protestant Christianity in that land. Particular satisfaction was taken in the record of church union and the relatively undisputed leadership of councils of churches.

Wilfred Bockelman, associate editor of the Lutheran Standard, spoke for the United States. He emphasized the statistical gain in church membership from 16% in 1850 to 62% in 1956. After conceding certain weaknesses in modern religion, he sounded a note of optimism in the church's practical evaluation of its task and its adaptation of means to the end.

A Protestant churchman, G. Baez-Camargo, analyzed the religious and sociological conditions in Mexico. He pointed out that though Protestants face strong opposition and are still only two percent of the population, their constituency has grown nine times in the past fifty years.

Harley H. Zeigler, formerly of the University of Hawaii, graphically described the precarious position of Protestant Christianity in Hawaii. He gave a good analysis of the obstacles, and the competition from pagan and Catholic sources.

The Caribbean area was treated by Maurice C. Daily, Methodist missionary in the Dominican Republic. A good summary of the history of the islands laid a background for a presentation of the present challenge in our backyard.

The book is full of interesting information well designed to inform and challenge the reader with the needs on and around the North American continent. Particularly in certain

chapters, however, there is a heavy emphasis on the sociological with some neglect of depth of personal experience. Many evangelicals, though believing in cooperation, would not share the passion for mergers and the delight in a certain brand of ecumenicity displayed by some of the writers.

Wilber T. Dayton

Middle East Pilgrimage, by R. Park Johnson. New York: Friendship Press, 1956. 164 pp. Cl. $2.95; Pa. $1.50.

The well defined traits of custom in the Middle East are disappearing; new ideas and new ways are moving in from the West promising to obliterate patterns of life that have persisted for centuries in the countries of West Asia, North Africa, and Southeast Europe. It all amounts to a widespread cultural pilgrimage. Dr. Johnson, field representative in the Middle East for the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions and for the Joint Committee of the United Mission in Iraq, is well qualified to open up to the reader the story of the pilgrimage. The thesis of the book may be summed up by asking the questions: Where will these peoples find the new way of life? Whom will they follow? How will the rest of the world be affected by what they do?

The author feels that if the synthesis of Middle Eastern society with Western ways moves forward such progress will make for a more stable independence and a broader maturation among the nations. When this stage is reached, Christianity will have greater freedom and opportunity to make its values known. The thinking in the book is challenging and ably expressed. One misses in this treatment, however, an emphasis on the role Christian evangelism can play in this "Middle East Pilgrimage."

James D. Robertson

The Gospel of Matthew, by David Thomas. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 560 pp. $3.95.

The aim of this volume of expository outlines is to bring out of Matthew's Gospel "the widest truths and highest suggestions for ethical and homiletical purposes." The strong good sense of the author, his insight into the Word, and homiletical in-

ventiveness combine to make the book a storehouse of things new and old. The author stays close to the Scriptures, and he stays close to life. The work is in large part the substance of discourses first spoken from the pulpit and later published in the Homilist over a period of years.

To him who would learn the fine art of biblical preaching, these homiletically arranged messages should serve as a fine introduction. Their reappearance comes at a time when the pulpit is rediscovering the value of the Bible in preaching.

James D. Robertson

The Chaos of Cults, by J. K. Van Baalen. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956. 409 pp. $3.95.

This study in present-day "Isms" is the second revised and enlarged edition of a book first published in 1938 and later enlarged in 1951. Altogether there have been sixteen printings since the first publication. Making use of the most recent literature coming from the cults themselves as well as from their critics, this new edition included a revised introductory chapter, new material on Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses, a rewritten chapter on Buchmanism, new quotations from the latest Unitarian-Modernist books, and a new chapter on Swedenborgianism.

Among the various cults discussed are Spiritism, Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, The Unity School of Christianity, Baha'ism, Anglo-Israelism, and Seventh-Day Adventism. The discussion of each cult includes a biographical sketch of its leaders, the facts concerning its origin, the principal teachings of the cult on crucial biblical doctrines, quotations from the writings of the cultists, and a biblical refutation of errors. There are questions at the end of each chapter for reflection and emphasis. The book also includes thirteen pages of selected bibliography, comprising primarily the works consulted by the author.

The present-day cults constitute a challenge to our current Christianity, as Dr. John E. Kuizenga observed in 1944, not only in regard to its adequacy to meet the deep needs of our time, but also in its opportunity to minister to the moral and spiritual hunger that is manifest in this generation. "The cults indicate a deep felt need, they bring to light a cruel neglect,

they shatter our hackneyed religious cant, they repudiate our smug churchianity. They challenge us, also, because they offer a grave threat through their lopsidedness, their overemphases, their pathetic failure to grasp ultimate reality." (Cf. John E. Kuizenga, "The Cults: Phenomenon and Challenge," Theology Today, v. I, p. 35f.)

There is sternness in Van Baalen's treatment of the cults, but the volume is informative and helpful for all who are concerned about the spread of a vital, evangelical, biblical Christianity.

William M. Arnett

The Apostles' Doctrine of the Atonement, by George Smeaton. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1870 and 1957. 548 pp. $5.95.

This is a solid conservative treatment of biblical theology. Under this heading the author, a pastor and professor of Divinity in the Free Church College, Scotland, undertakes a thorough study of the New Testament doctrine of the atonement. In pursuit of this theme, the author reviews first the teaching of the synoptic gospels and the fourth gospel on the sacrificial work of Christ. This is followed by a study of the epistles and the apocalypse. Some chapters treat of it also topically, as for example, chapter two dealing with the righteousness of God in the Pauline epistles. The volume well deserves re-publication. Not only is it timely in view of the resurgence of interest in biblical theology, but it deals with a subject of this theology very much in need of emphasis today. No serious student of the New Testament will consult this book in vain. The author was conversant with contemporary theologians and also skillful in Greek exegesis. To this he adds the evangelical, spiritual insight so indispensable to an adequate treatment of this important theme.

George A. Turner

Elementary Hebrew, by E. Leslie Carlson. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 270 pp. $3.50.

Within the past decade a renewed interest in teaching

methodology has produced a variety of Hebrew grammars. Some of these grammars employ unconventional procedures and some are modifications of older methods. This volume is a modification of the Harper inductive method, aiming at simplification. Having cut his "Hebrew" teeth on Harper's inductive method, the reviewer heartily agrees that simplification has been long overdue.

The grammar is divided into four sections each having twenty-four lessons. The inductive method has been criticized for its lack of systematic grammar. Carlson endeavors to overcome this shortcoming by making every third lesson a systematic review of the materials encountered in the previous lessons. This is needed since the student begins by reading Genesis 1:1 in Hebrew characters. As each Hebrew word is presented, the author explains what each character and vowel-point means. The Hebrew word is also transliterated with capitalized English letters. Since Hebrew is written from right to left, the transliteration also moves in the same direction, a fact which is disconcerting even to an experienced reader of Hebrew. A great deal of grammar is packed into the author's comments and a total of twelve chapters in Genesis is covered, but one cannot but have sympathy for the students who must try to assimilate a great variety of facts about Hebrew in what is still only a poorly-organized presentation.

G. Herbert Livingston

Cooperative Evangelism, by Robert O. Ferm. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958. 99 pp. $0.75.

In this small paper-back volume the dean of students at Houghton College seeks to vindicate the sponsorship of the Billy Graham Crusades by men of both liberal and conservative theological views. As such, it is an answer to the outspoken criticism of Billy Graham's policy from extreme elements in the church, particularly in certain quarters of fundamentalism.

Both Scriptural authority and historical precedent are cited to justify the willingness of an evangelist to preach the Gospel anywhere under any auspices so long as no strings are attached to his message. The practice of Jesus of preaching in the Temple and the Sanhedrin is said to substantiate this position, as well as the itineracy of Paul and the apostles. However, a point of distinction in the analogy was not made clear, namely, the difference between actively seeking the sponsorship of un-

believers and merely accepting the opportunities of preaching to them.

The chapter showing the similarity of Billy Graham's policy with that of the great evangelists of recent history is much more convincing. Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Charles G. Finney, Dwight L. Moody, and Billy Sunday are all cited as proponents of "cooperative evangelism." The worth of the book lies in the facts brought to light in this chapter.

Dr. Ferm has made a significant contribution to the study of revivalism in this historical defense of Billy Graham. At the same time history also shows that when a spiritual movement becomes defensive it has lost its momentum. Let us hope that this book does not indicate a trend toward self-conscious analysis and negativism. Billy Graham does not need a defense; his enemies do. God has vindicated, and will continue to vindicate, His own work.

Robert E. Coleman

Preaching the Christian Year, by Howard A. Johnson, editor. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957. 241 pp. $3.75.

To the strict nonconformist minister, the mention of the "Church Year" may well bring a sense of rigidity, a feeling that the liturgical churches' adherence to the traditional Christian Year must inevitably bring a loss of the freedom which belongs to the Christian pulpit. The volume before us brings together the thought of eight Protestant Episcopal ministers, in which each deals with the theme of preaching in a section of the Church Year.

Each writer seeks to do at least two things: first, to explore the meaning of his season; and second, to apply the New Testament teachings which gather about it to the problems of today's man in the pew. There is a general recognition of the changes which have come to pass in recent years with respect to the nature of God, and particularly with respect to the question of the sinfulness of man. Theodor O. Wedel, for example, in his section upon "Preaching in Pre-Lent," says:

> The era of so-called Liberalism tried its best to belittle the realism of man's expulsion from the garden of Eden. In that era, it was fashionable to ignore the doctrine of original sin as if it were an affront to the essential goodness of human nature.... This

> humanistic era, however, found out to its cost that the whole 'plot' of the Biblical story becomes meaningless without the event of the Fall which sets the scene. There can be no redemption if there is nothing to redeem. Today, fortunately, the realism has come into its own again... (p. 80).

Or, it is interesting to hear Frederick C. Grant, in his section under title of "Preaching in Holy Week" say:

> And there is a place for both the historical research and the faithful proclamation of the Gospel message... And it is a tragedy if we who value historical research and are driven by our very conscience to seek out the original meaning of the Scriptures, i.e., what the words meant to the writers and first readers of the Gospels, should fail to find here the 'saving' word to proclaim to men and women in their need (p. 122).

To some of us who have studied with Professor Grant, and have sought to understand (though perhaps without agreement) his Form-Critical Method, it is interesting to see how powerful is the magnet of the Passion Narrative to bring men back to a place of rather high regard for the literal accuracy of the biblical record. Another impressive section is that in which J. V. Langmead Casserley deals with the question of the resurrection of our Lord. He concludes his discussion of the empty tomb with the words:

> In saying all this I am pleading for the affirmation of the Resurrection in its integrity, as we find it in the New Testament preaching, and in the witness and sacramental life of the Church ever since. I am asking that we should not tolerate any spiritualized substitute for the fulness of the Gospel of the Resurrection. We must not proclaim it as a kind of myth or parable which illustrates a universal truth... we must not proclaim it existentially, as an invitation to, or even a provocation of, an interior act of life-binding decision (p. 165).

Enough has been said to indicate that this volume contains a great deal that is stimulating from the theological point of view. The minister in the non-liturgical Church will find other values too. He will derive a sense of the wholeness of the preacher's task which will tend to lift his selection of sermons above the level of the idiosyncratic and the impulsive.

Harold B. Kuhn

Billy Graham and the New York Crusade, by George Burnham and Lee Fisher. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House. 192 pp. $2.50.

A former news reporter, George Burnham, and a research assistant to the Billy Graham organization, Lee Fisher, team up to produce a running account of this generation's most famous evangelist and of his greatest evangelistic campaign thus far. They do not tell the whole story--no one could--but they give some sixty selected sketches of Billy Graham, his personality, his family, his theology, his vocation, culminating in his New York crusade. I recognize some of these chapters as having been published previously in the secular and religious press.

The book has a strong human interest appeal, especially in its reporting of behind-the-scenes incidents. It is written in an engaging manner. A few of the incidents are almost classics in contemporary writing, such as the example of Billy Graham going up on a mountain with his dog to read the Bible and find an answer to a weighty problem confronting his forthcoming campaign (pp. 45-48). The sketch which compares the unpretentious beginnings of Billy Graham with his present accomplishments is reminiscent of one coming from a log cabin to the presidency of the United States. As the author says, "It's a long way from a dairy farm in Charlotte, North Carolina, to Madison Square Garden in New York" (p. 48).

There is needless repetition in the narrative. For example, a sketch of Billy Graham's mission (pp. 37-39) is very similar to the treatment of "His Sincerity" and "His Authority" (pp. 21-26). However, the most unnecessary duplication is seen in portions of sermons quoted in the book. For example, Billy Graham's exhortation to teenagers to yield their sex instinct to God and let it drive them on to success is referred to twice (pp. 147, 167). No less than three times is reference made to the characteristic expression of the evangelist to some people who sit in church with a halo around their head on Sunday morning only to have horns grow out by Sunday evening and be blandishing a pitchfork by Monday morning (pp. 76, 84, 122). Doubtless the duality of authorship is responsible for much of this repetition.

What the book lacks in completeness and organization, the authors partially compensate for in their ability to paint a picture in words. The whole is uplifting in spirit.

Robert E. Coleman

The Witness of William Penn, by Frederick B. Tolles and E. Gordon Alderfer, editors. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957. 205 pp. $4.75.

It is not surprising that the 275th anniversary of William Penn's landing in Pennsylvania should stimulate research into the writings of the director of the Holy Experiment. This volume is a combination of direct quotations from the writings of Penn, and a careful annotation of them where clarity requires this. The work consists of ten sections, divided into three divisions. The first of these divisions deals with the general subject of "The Apostolic Christian," and contains two sections, "God in History" and "The Ethics of Radical Christianity." In this division he develops two major themes: first, that history has been given its major impetus by selected individuals who were under direct guidance of God's Spirit, so that beginning with the first human family, and continuing down to his own day, there had been increasing unfoldings of divine light and of spiritual progress. This, he felt, was being maintained by the Quakers of his time, who were, he felt, reviving primitive Christianity. The second theme is basically that simplicity in all areas of life is the heart and core of the Christian ethic. Much of the thought in this regard comes, of course, from his work, "No Cross, No Crown," written while Penn was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1668 and 1669.

The largest division of this work is the one sub-titled "The Christian Statesman" and which is developed in terms of seven sections. No review could hope to trace Penn's political thought in any detail; but perhaps the most relevant section here is the one entitled "Liberty on Trial." Penn says correctly that "human liberty is indivisible," so that when one area of freedom is attacked, every area is in jeopardy. He had in another connection (see especially pages 69-84) stated his views concerning religious freedom. In the famous "Bushel's case" Penn defined and defended the basic rights, not only of Englishmen, but of men under law. This section merits a most careful study.

The final section of the work, "The Final Distillation," comes from a period of enforced retirement in Penn's career, and reflects the maturing of his spiritual and ethical thought. The quotations are chiefly selections out of his "From Some Fruits of Solitude" written in 1693. Here we see his disciplined Puritanism, his passion for discipline but now modified

by experience and suffering. The pages (166 to 202 which record his observations) abound in practical wisdom and in quotable material.

This reviewer feels at a loss to express adequately what the volume contains, or what impression it leaves on the reader. Although Penn was thoroughly a man of the seventeenth century, and a man somewhat limited by his philosophy of history, yet his mind nimbly moved beyond his times and saw the problems which should arise, in but slightly changed form, in our time. Penn himself appears as the many-sided genius: as business man, as colonist, as statesman, as preacher (for he really was that), as Puritan, and above all, as dedicated Christian. This volume deserves a wide reading.

Harold B. Kuhn

The Lands Between, by John S. Badeau. New York: Friendship Press, 1958. 138 pp. $2.95.

Dr. Badeau's little book of background information about the Middle East has been called a "concise and popularly-written encyclopedia." It is to be highly recommended to the person who seeks a maximum understanding of that area with a minimum investment of time. The author has long been associated with the countries which he describes and speaks with the authority of experience and penetrating insights. He is now president of the Near East Foundation, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, and a lecturer and author on matters pertaining to the Middle East. His background includes the presidency of the American University at Cairo, Egypt; service as a civil and sanitary engineer for the United Mission in Mesopotamia, and on-the-spot observation of a number of historic events in Arab lands.

Part one discusses the land and people. The author sets forth as basic to his discussion this statement: "The Middle East is not so much a geographical area as it is a state of mind...that arises principally out of the relation of the region to the outside world." There is a most helpful discussion of the influence of mountains, plains, rivers, and rainfall. But the most interesting treatment is of the people themselves, who exhibit such diversity that no other term fits so well as the Arab expression "the sons of Adam." Transcending the medley of races, languages, and social organizations is a bond of common culture and faith that is shared to

a significant extent in spite of the atomistic effect of nationalism and trends toward modernization.

Part two treats the interactions of state and society. The treatment centers around three Arab words. The first means "awake" or "sit up and take notice." This awakening is seen in the birth of nations and the rise of nationalism that has characterized the past half century. The second has to do with the profound changes going on within the social structure--all the forces that mould the shapeless mass of humanity into a single social organism. Finally, there is the word for learning to live together, with all that it means within the Arab world, among Middle Eastern peoples, in their relation to the West, and to the Russian bloc. Some clarification is given of the role Communism seeks to play, and of the Middle Eastern attitude toward neutrality.

The third and final part treats Islam and the church. The author reflects an intimate understanding of the influence of Islam on the culture and institutions of the Middle East. He explains the difficulties and frustrations that the church has experienced in missionary endeavor in this area and makes interesting suggestions for missionary work of the future.

The book is carefully written. There are areas of interpretation and possibly of historical evaluation in which all might not agree, particularly in the comparisons of the speed and extent of the spread of Christianity and Islam. But the book is a valuable contribution to the understanding of the Middle East.

Wilber T. Dayton

Faith for Personal Crises, by Carl Michalson. New York: Scribner's, 1958. 184 pp. $3.50.

The author who undertakes to unite the major theses of existentialism with Christian theology finds his task difficult in any case. He compounds his difficulties when he undertakes to render his conclusions relevant to an age of spiritual illiteracy. Professor Michalson in the opening chapter of this work limits the objectives of the volume by suggesting that he is undertaking a poimenical theology, "a theology for the proper shepherding of sheep." This he describes as follows:

> Restructing the scope of the treatment to the personal crises in the lives of the people, it is simply one

> branch of the care of souls. I have called that branch a theology for crucial situations. Unlike the traditional forms of theology, such as Biblical, historical and dogmatic theology, it does not need to say everything there is to say about the faith...It may even deliberately soft-pedal some elements in the total body of belief which might obstruct the healing process...Nor will it become authoritarian and directive, insisting on the truth of its claims, there is just no point in that (page 13).

The body of the work seeks to relate this limited type of theology to the situations of Anxiety, Guilt, Doubt, Vocation, Marriage, Suffering and Death. Our author is concerned, of course, with Modern Man as he is faced with his crises without the assistance of vital faith. He traces the response of three personality-types, the rebellious, the recessive and the resigned, in life's crucial situations. With regard to response to the anxiety-situation, Professor Michalson suggests that the Christian answer is in terms of the overcoming of every major threat to our being by knowing "oneself in the image of God."

The analysis of the crisis of Guilt contains much which is thought provoking, but which seems to this reviewer to leave much unsaid. Guilt is seen primarily in terms of unworthiness: this neglects the very evident sense of guilt as attaching to something done. Or again, our author seems to make much too little of God's dislike of sin, and of the Scriptural teaching concerning a final judgment.

This reviewer found himself fascinated by the author's analysis of the several Crises, and by his attempt to see them in existential terms. The analyses were incisive, and reflect the work of one who has caught the heart-beat of the contemporary man-without-moorings. At the same time, there is a perplexing disregard upon the part of the author of those principals which are ordinarily regarded as part and parcel of the Christian understanding of things. There is a complete disparagement, it seems, of the element of divine sovereignty; it seems (by implication) that all will finally be saved; there has been no historical fall of man, Christ will not visibly return; and if this reviewer understands correctly the meaning of pages 177f, the author believes that St. Paul was talking nonsense when he said, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

In the midst of much which is instructive, many who read this work may find themselves asking, "Must a theology of

limited objectives be also a theology of defective principles?" It may be that our author feels that the Modern Man will not listen to anything else. We reply that perhaps he will have to do so.

Harold B. Kuhn

Climbing the Heights, by Al Bryant (compiler). Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956. 382 pp. $2.50.

Always welcome is the well-chosen selection of daily devotional materials, and particularly a selection which ministers to the sense of frustration and perplexity so common in modern life. The book editor of Zondervan Publishing House has brought together in Climbing the Heights a refreshing group of one-page readings, chosen from the writings of such men and women as Martin Luther, Charles Wesley, Andrew Murray, A. T. Pierson, Charles H. Spurgeon, J. H. Jowett, Madame Guyon and F. B. Meyer of former days, and from contemporary writers such as Oswald J. Smith, Frank E. Gaebelein, Bob Jones, Jr., Bertha Munro and Eugenia Price.

Appended to many of the daily readings are excellently selected poems, which bring before the reader the inspiration of such writers as Paulus Gerhardt, Isaac Watts, John Henry Newman, and George Matheson, to mention a few. This volume makes excellent reading for the Christian at any stage; it is especially appropriate as a gift to the young believer who is seeking to find his way about the "new world" into which the Gospel has brought him.

Harold B. Kuhn

The Epistle to the Ephesians, by Joseph Parker. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 272 pp. $2.75.

The Baker Reprint Library is fulfilling a significant service in bringing to the contemporary reading public works which would otherwise only be found in buckram-shedding volumes in old libraries. This one is by Joseph Parker, an English Congregational minister of the latter part of the past century, whose commentary upon Ephesians was originally published

in London by Hodder and Stoughton.

In plan, the work is a verse-by-verse commentary upon Paul's Ephesian Letter, and seeks to expound, particularly, the teaching of the Epistle upon the nature and calling of the Church. The emphasis is upon the inward nature of faith, the inner working of divine grace, and the final glory of the Church as she is gathered together at the end of time under the lordship of her great Head.

Parker's The Epistle to the Ephesians can scarcely be compared to the classic commentaries, such as those of Clarke, Henry, Lange or Godet. No great effort is made to expound the original, for the emphasis is basically homiletical and practical. At times, the author seems to make concessions to the trends of his theological times which from our present vantage point seems needless. In general, he recovers himself and returns to the major line of thought within a page or so. His work has merit as giving some fresh insights to bear upon a great Epistle.

Harold B. Kuhn

Book Notices

Letters to the Seven Churches, by Joseph A. Seiss (Reprint). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 343 pp. $2.75.

Baker Book House continues to render the Christian world a service in making available in reprint form the works of writers of other days. This volume, written by the renowned Lutheran student of the last century, contains a heart-warming series of expositions of the letters to the churches of Asia. It is, like the larger series, Lectures on the Apocalypse, a thoughtful and well-written interpretation of this part of Scripture.

Twelve Great Questions About Christ, by Clarence E. Macartney. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956 (Reprint from edition of 1923). 221 pp. $2.50.

This volume, originally printed by the Fleming H. Revell Company in 1923, is concerned with such questions as the origin, teachings, miracles, resurrection, saviourhood, return, and uniqueness of Jesus Christ. It reflects the work of the pastor diligent in his study, and contains much that is stimulating to both mind and heart.

Scriptural Teaching on Stewardship, by Roy T. Cowles. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1958. 52 pp. $0.85.

This booklet is at one and the same time a plea for systematic and broad-gauge stewardship, and a rejection of tithing as an expression of stewardship. The plea is in the name of "the liberty of the Christian man," and is persuasive, but somehow the author seems to sacrifice the systematic quality of stewardship which tithing conserves.

Our Contributors

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